

# LITTLE TALES FOR LITTLE PEOPLE



## Sparrows Hunt a Cat.

**S**EVERAL persons watched a flock of plucky little English sparrows drive a cat out of a New York park early the other morning. Hundreds of the birds were hopping about in the grass and flower beds looking for worms, when a large gray cat stole stealthily across the sward and hid among the flowers. She lay motionless, watching a chance to spring upon a sparrow, but the birds kept well out of reach. Finally, the flock seemed to be holding a council of war. They grouped themselves on the turf, a few yards away from the cat, and chattered vociferously. Then they began hopping toward the enemy, forming a regular line of battle. Puss became nervous as the big flock of birds came almost within her reach, and she backed away, evidently hoping that one would be foolhardy enough to come within reaching distance. Suddenly the whole flock took wing, with great chattering and whirring, and flew directly over the cat. It frightened her, and she fled. The birds again settled down among the flower beds, and once more began scratching for worms.

## A Small Soldier.

An American boy accustomed to the unusual freedom enjoyed here would think some of the laws of other countries very hard to obey. The military laws, which are so strictly carried out, sometimes give special hardships. In some countries of Europe every able-bodied young man must serve a certain length of time in the army. The names of all old enough to serve are placed upon a list and each one is duly notified by the proper authorities to appear for duty. One young man about three feet in height and of proportionate weight was notified in the usual way. He was not excused from service until the officer in charge found that he could not keep step with his comrades nor carry the regimental flag. He was the smallest soldier in Europe, perhaps in the world.

## A Day Dream.

An eighth grade girl in the Minneapolis schools was awarded a prize for this story: One afternoon, feeling very tired, I took a book and lay down on the couch to read. After a little the book dropped slowly lower and lower and I felt as if I were falling swiftly down, down, down. With a start I found myself sinking to the bottom of the sea. Looking around, I saw at first only water, water everywhere. Suddenly I heard a small, piping voice at my side: "Who are you, what is your name, and where are you going?" "My name is Olga, and I do not know where I am going," I replied; "but I cannot see who you are." "Look down," he said, "and you will." Doing as he said, I perceived the strangest looking creature I ever saw. He looked like a dwarf. His hair was long and white and I could not help but ask, "How old are you?" "About eight leagues," he said. "Eight leagues?" I thought, wondering, but, not liking to ask more questions, I kept still. There were a great many pretty shells scattered here and there on the ground and I was just going to take some when all became dark overhead and I grew so frightened that I began to run. "What was it?" I asked, breathlessly. "Only a whale swimming by," he said, looking amused at my fright. After he had taken me around a while to see the different fish and shells I began to want to go home. Alas! how should I find the way? I began

to cry, but my new friend said, "Cheer up and I will put you on the right road." He rubbed something over my eyes and suddenly there came a crash. I awoke to find myself lying on the floor with the book far away. I jumped up and at first did not know whether I was at the bottom of the sea or at home.

## The Baker's Ban.

The baker man was kneading buns— His trough was deep and wide— When, much to his surprise, he heard A small voice by his side.

"Oh, make me large and fat," it said, "And stuff me full of plums, So that I may attract applause From every one who comes."

"Oh, put a piece of citron in, And make me rich and rare, That I may serve for dukes and earls Who sumptuously do fare."

The baker chuckled in his sleeve To hear him talk so big, But thought, "I'll put in everything, And let him run his rig!"

He put in all he had on hand, And made him rich and rare, And set him in the window pane, To make the natives stare.

For, swelled to twice his natural size With yeast and plums and pride, He scorned the doughnuts, pies and cakes, And elbowed them aside.

"I'm waiting for the duke," he said, With whom I am to dine! Just then two newsmen came along Whose appetites were fine.

"My eye," they cried, "come over here And see this jolly bun; Let's buy him for our supper, quick! And so the thing was done."

Two morals in this little song Are had at easy rates; 'Tis ill to wait for dukes and earls In these United States.

And when the baker kneads his dough, If then you are begun, No matter what he may put in, You'll always be a bun! —Isabel Frances Bellows in St. Nicholas.

## Musical Prodigy.

Miss Kathleen Mills, a little English girl, can undoubtedly claim the very happy distinction of being one of the youngest organists in the world. Quite recently a vacancy occurred for an organist at Ongar (Essex) Roman Catholic church, and little Miss Mills, a child of 11 years, was asked by Rev. Father Larkin to act as a temporary substitute. The child played for several Sundays, but on Whit Sunday grave doubts were entertained by the church officials as to whether she was capable of conducting the musical service of high mass. However, so satisfactorily did she carry it through that recently, on the retirement of the organist, she was offered and accepted the post as a permanency. But the distinction of being the world's youngest organist belongs to Master Johann Sebastian Magill, a Southgate child of 6. This prodigy has, according to the *Middlesex Gazette*, been giving organ recitals at a Wood Green Baptist chapel in a style which delighted the congregation, and brought forth special commendation from the minister. Since then he has played at the Alexandria Palace and at the Victoria Hall, New Barnet.

## A Singular Bird.

A singular bird of South America, the hoatzin, possesses, when young, claws on its wings, and these are used like the thumb and forefinger of a hand. These young birds move about at will in the treetops before they can fly. Grasping the boughs with enormous feet, and aided by the wing claws and beak, they are expert climbers at a very tender age. But the

wing at this time differs in several other remarkable particulars from that of other birds and even from that of the adult condition. Closely examined, it will be found that the hand is conspicuously longer than the forearm and that the thumb is also unusually long. Furthermore, the under surface of the thumb and first finger will be found to resemble those of the human finger, in that they terminate in a fleshy ball, obviously useful for grasping purposes. At this time, then, the wings serve the very unbirdlike function of fore legs, and locomotion is quadrupedal rather than bipedal, and this remains the case until the power of flight is attained. It is believed that these fingers date back to the bird's evolution from the reptile.

## Youthful Materialists.

He is young and a materialist. Nearly every child is that, however. They do not take much of anything for granted. They want proof. This child had been disobedient and had got into trouble, and his mother was trying to impress upon him the naughtiness of his conduct. She told him about God, who knew everything and could see everything.

"You may hide something from me," she said, "but God sees it all."

"Can He see me now?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Right here in this room?"

"Yes."

He studied the ceiling intently for a minute and then said:

"Well, if you think He can I wish you'd show me the hole in the roof that He peeks through."

Another little materialist—a girl this time—objected to going to bed alone.

"But you're not alone," exclaimed her mother. "God is with you all the time, and then you have your dolly besides."

She examined her doll critically before replying.

"I don't want them," she said at last. "I want somebody with a skin face."

## Old-Time Advisers.

Mr. Peachen in the "Complaisant Gentleman," written early in the seventeenth century, addressing himself to young students, says: "With the gown you have put on the man. Your first care should be the choice of company. Men of the soundest reputation for Religion, Life and Learning, that their conversation may be to you a living and a moving library. For recreation seek those of your own rank and quality." In "Home Life Under the Stuarts" further quotations from the work are given.

To keep good company he enjoins as of the first importance. Frugality and a moderate diet are to be recommended. "Affability in Discourse" has a paragraph to itself: "Giving entertainment in a sweet and liberal manner, and with a cheerful courteous seasoning your talk at the table among grave and serious discourses with concepts of wit and pleasant inventions, as ingenious Epigrams, Merry Tales, witty Questions and Answers, etc." It must be admitted, however, that the specimens of wit he gives do not seem to modern taste in the least funny.

From the letters of Lady Brilliana Harley to her son at Oxford we get a glimpse of the home side, of the anxieties of a very careful and tender mother, her advice as to health and religion, and her provision for his comfort. She writes:

"Deare Ned, if you would have anythings send me word; or if I thought a cold pye, or such a thing, would be of any pleasure to you, I would send it you. But your father says you care not for it, and Mrs.

Pirson tells me, when her sonne was at Oxford, and shee sent him such things, he prayed her that she would not."

Her son seems to have set her mind at ease on the subject, for the next year she writes:

"I have made a pye to send you; it is a kide pye. I believe you have not that meat ordinarily at Oxford; on halfe of the pye is seasoned with on kind of seasoning and the other with another. I thinke to send it by this carrier."

Again she writes: "I like the stufe for your cloths well; but the cullor of those for every day I doo not like so well; but the silk chamlet I like very well. Let your tokens be always of the same cullor of your cloths."

## The Obedient Egg.

Take a raw egg and empty it by means of pin holes. As soon as the inside of it is dry fill it quarter full of fine sand, and then, with a little wax, seal up the holes. It now looks like an ordinary egg.

The next time you have boiled eggs for breakfast take your prepared egg and substitute it for the one that is given you.

Then you may safely announce that your egg is ready to obey your commands.

You can place it at will in any position you desire. It will stand on the edge of a knife or on the rim of a glass, no matter whether you put it endways or sideways.

In the last case you will cause more astonishment, because it will seem to trespass against the laws of gravity. The only precaution you need observe is to tap the egg gently, so as to cause the sand it contains to settle each time at the bottom, and thus it will assume any position you wish.

## Don'ts for Young Mothers.

Don't let your dolls sit near the fire; it spoils their complexion.

Don't give them currants, crumbs or cakes to eat; such things are bad for their digestion.

Don't entrust them to the care of your brothers; boys are not to be trusted with dolls.

Don't leave them out in the yard all night; they will probably get freezingfits if you do.

Don't wash their face with soap too often; their delicate skin cannot stand it.

Don't allow pins to be stuck in their bodies; some people think dolls can't feel.

## A Game for Boys.

One boy sits down on the floor with his knees up, and another sits down in the same manner, each boy sitting on the other's toes. Then each holds on to the upper part of the other's arm. Now rock to and fro, and you will find you can go quite a long distance across the floor. It is rather funny to have two or three couples all doing it at the same time, and see who gets to the other side of the room first. Of course, this game should be played in the house, and even then it's hard on clothes.

## Young Hero Rewarded.

A rare honor for one of his age has been conferred on Stanley M. Cox, the 12-year-old son of Arthur M. Cox of Brooklyn, by the Humane society of Massachusetts in awarding him a bronze medal for bravery in saving life. Stanley saved the life of Frank Deveau, a boy of 8, at East Gloucester on August 13 last. Both boys became unconscious when they were taken from the water. Cox soon recovered, but the Deveau lad was believed to be dead and was not revived for an hour.

